

# The Iowa African-American Journal

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November 2000

## Commissioners

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*Fort Madison*

**Angela Gravely-Smith**  
*Iowa City*

**James Hester**  
*Davenport*

**Isaiah Johnson**  
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*Des Moines*

**Joseph McGill**  
*Cedar Rapids*

**Camille Scully**  
*Waterloo*

**Jerome Thomas**  
*Dubuque*

**Rose Vasquez, ex officio**  
*Director*  
*Human Rights Department*

*There is currently one  
vacancy on the commission*

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## **Scott County Sheriff and State Patrol Study Racial Profiling**

Scott County sheriff's deputies have started collecting race and gender information on drivers whose vehicles are stopped for alleged traffic violations. Sheriff Mike Bladel said it's an effort to assure the public that the department does not engage in racial profiling – the practice of stopping a vehicle simply because of the driver's race. Beginning in November, deputies have been required to complete a vehicle stop data form after every traffic stop, regardless of whether a citation is issued.

"I am extremely confident that the Scott County Sheriff's Department and all the law enforcement agencies in our area act in a professional manner when it comes to the fair treatment of those we serve, regardless of race," said Bladel, "but it's a hard position to defend without accurate data." Sheriff Bladel recognizes that many members of his community have concerns about his deputies' vehicle-stop practices and he agrees that it is a serious issue that mandates a response from law enforcement. He says that while he is sure that his deputies do not engage in racial profiling, "sometimes you just can't say it, you've got to show it."

The Scott County Sheriff's Department is the first law enforcement agency in Scott County to begin tracking race and gender

data during traffic stops, however, other agencies in Iowa have already begun similar efforts.

The Iowa City Police Department has already commenced a similar study and is presently analyzing the data that has been collected. The Iowa State Patrol began collecting sample data in October to test its system and will begin statewide collection of racial information in January. With over 350 troopers patrolling Iowa's highways and over one million contacts with motorists every year, the findings from the project will provide meaningful information about the treatment of minority drivers in Iowa.

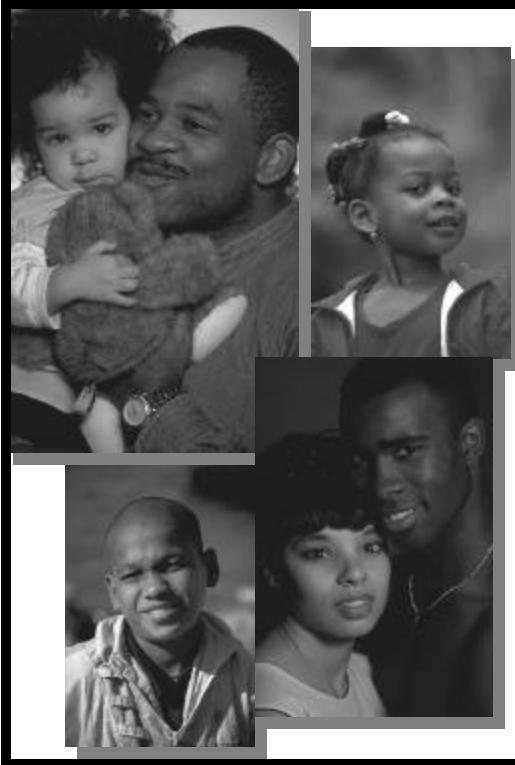
At this time there are no similar data collection efforts being made by city law enforcement agencies in Polk, Black Hawk or Scott Counties, where most African-Americans in Iowa live. The American Civil Liberties Union is encouraging states to pass legislation to require local law enforcement to track racial information, however, many Iowa officials believe that agencies should do it only on a voluntary basis.

## **ICSAA Completes Public Hearings and Prepares Agenda 2001**

The Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans (ICSAA) conducted eight public hearings throughout Iowa to gather information on issues affecting African-Americans in the state. The following cities were sites for the hearings: Davenport, Burlington, Des Moines, Iowa City, Sioux City, Waterloo, Clinton and Cedar Rapids.

Individuals and organizations with an interest in these issues were encouraged to

present written or oral testimony at the public hearings. Testimony will be used to shape the ICSAA 2001 Agenda, which includes proposals to the Governor and General Assembly as well as other constructive action. One of the new agenda items for 2001 is increasing African-American home ownership. Copies of Agenda 2001 will be available in January and may be obtained by contacting the ICSAA office at 800-351-4659.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

# The Sixth Annual Status of African-Americans State Conference

## “Iowa’s Black Families in Crisis”

March 9-10, 2001

Downtown Des Moines Marriott  
Des Moines, Iowa

For more information call 800-351-4659 or check out the  
conference web site at [www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa](http://www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa)

Sponsored by  
The Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans

## Citizens Needed to Serve on State Boards and Commissions

The Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans (ICSAA) is currently seeking to fill a vacancy. Like all other state boards and commissions, the fundamental objective of the agency is to provide much needed citizen input into the process of state government. The primary responsibilities for ICSAA commissioners include attending day-long meetings which are held on a quarterly basis and serving on at least one subcommittee. Current ICSAA subcommittees include fundraising, conference planning and legislative. About half of the quarterly meetings are held in Des Moines and the rest are held in other parts of the state.

Once selected, individual commissioners are appointed by the Governor, must be confirmed by the Senate, and serve

a four-year term. The process begins with an application that can be accessed from the Governor's website at [www.state.ia.us/governor/boards/index.html](http://www.state.ia.us/governor/boards/index.html). Applicants may apply for positions on more than one board or commission based on their individual interests or expertise.

African-Americans in Iowa are needed to participate on the boards and commissions that shape policies that affect people of color, such as economic development, health and education. ICSAA strongly encourages interested individuals to consider applying to become an ICSAA commissioner or a member of any other board or commission in which they have an interest. Application forms may be obtained on line (see above) or by calling 515-281-0215.

## ICSAA Tours Iowa State Penitentiary, Meets with Warden

Responding to concerns about the growing number of incarcerated African-Americans in Iowa, members of the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans visited the Iowa State Penitentiary in August. African-Americans comprise only 2 percent of Iowa's population, but fill almost a quarter of the state's prison cells. A group of seven commissioners and staff met with Warden L.W. Graves, toured the penitentiary and met with three inmates who are serving life sentences for first-degree murder. Commissioners had an opportunity to learn about the inmates' experiences in the criminal justice system and their opinions of prison conditions for African-Americans.

While it is clear that the disproportionate incarceration rate for African-Americans is caused by a multitude of factors, including deficiencies in education and employment, ICSAA members were encouraged by the cooperation and commitment of Warden Graves and the Department of Corrections to address the issues. ICSAA will continue to work closely with the Governor's Task Force on the African-American Prison Population to identify solutions and develop effective strategies for change. The Task Force will present its findings in spring 2001.

## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Lifetime Service Award 2001 Nomination Form

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Ceremony is a state celebration sponsored by the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans. Next year's event is scheduled for Monday, January 15, 2000 and will feature the presentation of the Fourth Annual MLK Lifetime Achievement Awards. The awards recognize individuals who have demonstrated commitment to the vision of Dr. King by promoting the racial equality of all people of Iowa. In order to be considered to receive this award, one must have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to diversity and inclusion in his/her communities and in the State of Iowa.

*Please type or print neatly.*

### Nominee:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (office) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Person submitting nomination:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (office) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Include the following with the completed nomination form:

- ? A summary of the nominee's contributions that reflect the theme of the award;
- ? Three (3) letters of support;
- ? A biographical sketch of the nominee (a resume may be used); and
- ? Three other items of supportive material: This could include, but is not limited to, pertinent newspaper and/or magazine articles, primary works, published material, etc.

**Application materials must be postmarked no later than December 8, 2000. Mail to:**

Kim Cheeks  
Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans  
Department of Human Rights  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Contact us at (800) 351-4659 or 515/281-7283 to request additional information.

# *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Project 2001*

*Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans*



"Everybody can be great because anybody can serve." Americans in communities across the nation took these words of Martin Luther King to heart January 19, 1998, making the King Holiday a day of service – A Day On, Not a Day Off.

With the leadership of national service programs, communities are transforming the observance of Martin Luther King's birthday into a day of service, fulfilling the goal of the King Holiday and Service Act of 1994. Throughout the nation on this day, service activities reflect Dr. King's life and teachings, bring people together, break down barriers, and help solve problems through citizen action.

The State of Iowa Dr. King Planning Committee would like to extend this opportunity for you, as a citizen of Iowa, to get involved by participating in some type of service project to strengthen your community. The Planning Committee will present a Service Project Award to the project best representing Dr. King's call to service. Following are just some examples of worth-while service projects: literacy programs, renovating low-income and senior housing, organizing neighborhood watches, building playgrounds, restoring schools, delivering services to the elderly or homeless, serving as companions to youth or elderly, reading to children at shelters, and mentoring youth.

To be considered for the Service Project Award, your project should be completed (or in progress, if it is an on-going project) by December 15, 2000. Please provide a brief description of your service project and its impact on your community, using the attached form. Mail or fax the completed form to the address or fax number listed. The award will be given to the individual, group or organization whose project has had the greatest impact on their respective communities. The award will be presented at the 12th Annual State of Iowa, MLK, Jr. Ceremony on Monday, January 15, 2001.

**Responses must be postmarked by December 22, 2000.**

**2001  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Service Project**

Individual       Group

(Please attach additional pages if necessary)

Name(s)	
Address (if a group, please complete for all names)	City, State, & Zip
Telephone	E-mail address
Brief description of service project:	

Date project started \_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to submit photographs, videos, or any promotional items involved with your project.  
NOTE: these items will not be returned.

Record the total number of hours dedicated to your community service project.

<u>Month 1</u>	<u>Month 2</u>	<u>Month 3</u>	<u>Month 4</u>
Week 1 _____	Week 1 _____	Week 1 _____	Week 1 _____
Week 2 _____	Week 2 _____	Week 2 _____	Week 2 _____
Week 3 _____	Week 3 _____	Week 3 _____	Week 3 _____
Week 4 _____	Week 4 _____	Week 4 _____	

Department of Human Rights

If you have any additional questions, please call Kim Cheeks at (515)-281-7283 or (800)-351-4659 or Email: kim.cheeks@dhr.state.ia.us. You may also visit our website at www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa.

**IOWA COMMISSION ON THE  
STATUS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS**

Department of Human Rights  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Staff:  
Traevana Potter-Hall, Director  
Kim Cheeks, Program Planner

Phone: 515-281-7283 or 800-351-4659  
Fax: 515-281-3858  
Website: www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa

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## Across Black Iowa...

**Davenport:** A professional football player turned Deere & Company employee is the new president of the Davenport Community School District board. Jim Hester, a 12-year veteran of the board and member of the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans, was named president September 18, 2000. Jamie Howard, another African-American board member entering her third year, was named vice-president for one of the largest school districts in the state. "We will maintain the focus on children," said Hester.

**Des Moines:** After deliberating for nine hours, a Polk County jury acquitted bouncers Jeff Portman and Tom Dueber in October for their role in the death of Charles Lovelady. The bouncers were indicted in April on non-felony charges of manslaughter after an altercation with Lovelady at a Des Moines nightclub ended in Lovelady's death.

**Des Moines:** Larry W. Carter, who led the Des Moines branch of the NAACP during a turbulent time in Des Moines' history, died of complications of diabetes in November. He was 63. Carter was president of the NAACP's local branch for 12 years until 1993 and also served as a national board member. He remained a local force in politics. "It's a terrible loss for the civil rights community," said Robert Wright, Sr., president of the Iowa-Nebraska Chapter of the NAACP.

**New Hampton:** A familiar name was missing from the November ballot for sheriff in Chickasaw County: The guy who had the job. William Dean, an independent who unseated a popular incumbent four years ago to become one of only two African-American sheriffs in Iowa, attempted to win re-election as a write-in after a mix-up over nominating papers. The 57-year-old Virginia native and former Marine was a public safety officer at the University of Northern Iowa before moving to his wife's hometown of Nashua to run against 16-year-incumbent Tom Bernatz, a Republican. Democrat Martin Larsen ultimately won the November 7 election.

**Newton:** Lloyd Ward, chairman and chief executive officer of Maytag Corporation, has resigned ending a tumultuous 15 months as the top executive of the Newton-based appliance maker. His appointment was seen as a breakthrough for African-Americans nationally as well as in central Iowa. He was one of the first African-Americans to achieve that post at a Fortune 500 company.